

History Becomes Present: Constructing Worlds for Past, Present, and Future Ancestors through Tlingit Oratory

Joseph Marks

The Remembered
Caught my tear
in their blanket and
cradled me
in their wisdom

—Joseph Marks

In the far back corner of the hall, the older Tlingit woman stands next to three men. Her hair has grayed in her wise years, yet her age does not stop her from doing what she needs to do. The clan house they are in is filled with people, many of whom are birth speakers of Tlingit. Everyone would know if there were any mistakes, and knowing how Tlingits are, the mistake would be corrected on the spot in front of everyone. The standard of oration is high, and everyone is acutely aware of the sensitive subject, death.

The first speaker of the clan, Matthew Lawrence, Kwéix' Éesh, stands up, formally asking for the floor from the host clan. Kwéix' Éesh explains how the next speaker is intertwined and woven into the host clan through clanship. He then gives the floor over to him, David Kadashan, Kaatyé. Kaatyé delicately and intricately unfolds a metaphor of a tree that has fallen over into a river due to a storm. It floats out in the ocean. The tree spins and gets lost in the waves until it washes up on the shore. His words reflect the way the host clan is feeling. He ends his speech and William Johnson begins speaking for a moment. The third speech ends. It was short, less than a minute long. The speaker had introduced the elderly woman to the host clan, her relatives, similar to Kwéix' Éesh. She straightens up and begins to project her voice, echoing in the building, so that all could hear how she masterfully and empathically twines everyone's words, accomplishing one of the most sensitive aspects of the Tlingit way of life, removing grief.

JOSEPH MARKS (Tlingit name: Koodéik') is a first-generation college graduate and currently a joint PhD candidate at the University of Arizona. He is Tlingit and comes from southeast Alaska, originating from the village of Klukwan.

Jessie Dalton, named Naa Tláa, belonged to the T'áḡdeintaan clan. Dalton was born in Tenakee, Alaska, in 1903 and had attended school at Sheldon Jackson in Sitka, Alaska, during a time when it was illegal to speak any Indigenous language. Nonetheless, she became both highly fluent in English and mastered Tlingit oratory. By the time of the memorial for Jim Marks, my paternal grandfather's brother, Dalton had become the spokesperson of her clan. Her mastery of Tlingit oratory is demonstrated in this speech that I will analyze, where her task was to remove the grief from the host clan. At the Jim Marks Memorial in 1968, Jessie Dalton, with the use of various Tlingit linguistic features and salient clan motifs, taps into generational knowledge, which, I posit, establishes a world where the past and present occupy one space in her speech (i.e., a chronotopic world). The creation of the *chronotope* and merging the past with the present, bringing ancestors of the past and future to the present with the living, ultimately connects families and clans together into one space.

Dalton's speech at the memorial collapses the space-time between the past and the present, creating a world that she populates with figures of personhood who pull the clans together. In this paper, I analyze her speech, drawing on work in linguistic anthropology that utilizes Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the *chronotope*.¹ I use *chronotope*, meaning spacetime, in my analysis to explore the ways that time and space are represented in narrative. It helps illustrate the strategic use of space, the here and there, and time, the then and now, in a Tlingit ceremony setting. Through this investigation, Dalton shows us how times and spaces are collapsible by the understanding that "cross-chronotope alignment between person here-and-now and person altogether elsewhere transpose selves across discrete zones of cultural spacetime."² In this way, the article is about identities, and how different identity stances—for people who are present or not—are crafted by Dalton within her oratory.

This speech demonstrates Dalton's training and skill in delivering Tlingit speeches. In the sections of this paper, I will show how it's not only about the meanings of the words themselves but how she draws on various resources to connect to other interactions, ancestors, space, and time. Jan Blommaert wrote that the historical objects—in Bakhtin's case, novels—"articulate complexly layered historicities, the historical ideological positions of narrator, plot, and characters in the form of chronotopes."³ Novels and written forms are one form of literacy, recording information onto objects (paper) through a written form, such as an orthography. Instead of these novels, Dalton uses objects of literacy recognized by Tlingits, objects where our clan histories are recorded. These objects, we will see, can be masks, robes, and names. Dalton narrates these histories using the objects and invokes them. Dalton can "bring chunks of history to the interaction here-and-now as relevant context," meaning that histories are "invokable" and a chronotopic world is possible to create.⁴ By invoking chunks of history, Dalton is drawing on multiple contexts to create a chronotopic world. Dalton has a goal in her speech, to remove grief from people, and to accomplish that goal, she reaches out to the past through recorded histories for the use in the present moment.

Not only are Tlingit histories able to be inserted into different contexts, but people of the past can occupy spaces of the present. In her exploration of chronotopes,

Kristina Wirtz has suggested that they “are semiotic products and interactional accomplishments, and they may appear in the stream of interaction in evocative moments rather than as totalizing wholes.”⁵ In Dalton’s speech, we see how semiotic products such as demonstratives and morphemes, as well as clan objects and names and the interactional act of making a speech, appear to be interacting with each other. These are various objects and lexical items that are never fully narrated or explained, as seen in the speech. It is enough to mention them, supporting Wirtz’s theorization of chronotopes involving moments rather than totalizing wholes. A chronotopic world in this case also only need evocative moments. Much like Wirtz’s description of spirit possession in Cuban folk religion, I am concerned with the linguistic and semiotic forms that bring Tlingit ancestors into the present. Wirtz shows us how, in Cuba, the people, through a theatrical performance become possessed. In this Tlingit case study though, rather than being possessed, Tlingits have a history of reincarnation, which recognizes that clan spirits are reembodyed in subsequent generations. Through this speech, I argue, Dalton taps into this knowledge of reincarnation to reincarnate Tlingit ancestors temporarily, which I call *limited reincarnation*.

Structuring this paper has been a challenge due to the complex nature of the speech. I thus have organized it in such a way that it will, I hope, stay true to the original speech and also offer a meaningful analysis. After giving some background information about the language, orthography, and the event, I introduce the speech in its entirety in Table 2. In the next section, I begin the analysis of how Dalton reconstructs a timeline to draw the history to the present. By reviewing the demonstratives in Tlingit, I show how Dalton uses these in skillful and unexpected ways. Following this analysis, I explore the importance of how the speechmaker must relate herself to who she is addressing. By explaining and connecting the speech to clanship terms, Dalton is able to make her words mean more to the hosts. I next analyze the morphology of the language. This piece explains the two major differences between the past-tense suffix and the perfective aspect in Tlingit. Following this, I draw on Kristina Wirtz’s work to define and understand what I call limited reincarnation by pulling out a section of the speech showing this phenomenon. Because the morphology and demonstratives are used in strategic ways in the speech, I dedicate another section showing another way in which Dalton uses these linguistic features to cause the healing process to begin. I conclude by taking a step back, analyzing what Dalton was doing *beyond* this speech and what it means for us who work in language revitalization and reclamation.

LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF TLINGIT ORATORY

The Tlingit language is part of the Na-Dene language family. Tlingit country stretches down from Yakutat, Alaska, to Ketchikan, Alaska, with some locations in Canada such as Whitehorse and Teslin. The language has four main vowels that are distinguishable by the length of the vowel and the tone. The following table shows vowels by length and how they are written in the orthography.

TABLE 1. *Tlingit vowels in orthography*

Short	Long
a	aa
e	ei
i	ee
u	oo

Vowels can have one of three tones: high, low, or neutral. The high tone is marked with an ascending accent, e.g., \acute{V} , while unmarked vowels indicate a low tone, e.g., \check{V} . The neutral tone takes the polar opposite of whatever tone the vowel preceding the neutral tone. Though these tones are labeled, high and low, all Tlingit tones start at pitch and then descends. No Tlingit tones continue to ascend in pitch. Tlingit also has forty-seven consonants. These consonants are represented in the orthography by modifying the International Phonetical Alphabet (IPA). A uvular consonant will be underlined, e.g., \underline{C} V, while a velar consonant is not, e.g., CV. Consonants also contrast by being ejective or nonejective, which is marked with an apostrophe, e.g., C'V. They also contrast by labialization, which is marked with a *w* following the consonant, e.g., Cw. When the consonant is both ejective and labialized, it is written as the consonant, followed by the apostrophe and the *w*, e.g., C'w.

The speech that is the subject of this paper was recorded in Hoonah, Alaska. Hoonah is a small village of less than a thousand people, which by Alaskan standards is a medium-sized village. The village sits in the rainforest of southeast Alaska, and wherever you look, you can see mountains, various kinds of trees, and, what is most important to the Tlingit people, the ocean. It is your picturesque quintessential Alaskan village. The language learned in schools is primarily based on this dialect area. However, since this speech is at a memorial, explained in the next section, people are coming from all over Tlingit territory. Some come from Angoon, which has a notable dialect difference, while many others come from Klukwan and Haines, sharing more similarities to Hoonah, with some coming from Yakutat. There are many communities represented at this memorial. However, all dialects of Tlingit are mutually intelligible.

GÓOX̄ ḠUWAKAAN̄ K̄U.ÉEX'Í: JIM MARKS MEMORIAL, 1986

This Chookaneidí memorial for Jim Marks, my paternal grandfather's oldest brother, was held in Hoonah, Alaska, in 1968. The speeches were recorded by Rosita Worl, who is also Tlingit, and then later translated by Nora Marks Dauenhauer.⁶ According to Dauenhauer, the capturing of these speeches during a $\underline{K}\underline{u}.éex'$ (memorial) was unique.⁷ It had never been done before, and it was the first time such speeches had ever been published, let alone analyzed for its linguistic features. In Nora and Richard Dauenhauer's book *Haa Tuwunáagu Yís, for Healing Our Spirit: Tlingit Oratory* (where the speech I am analyzing is published), they explain, "It is certainly the first set collected in performance, transcribed, translated, and annotated by a scholar for whom Tlingit is a first language."⁸ They underline the uniqueness of capturing these speeches and the explication done by a speaker of the language, in that these annotations can

be used to understand the Tlingit perspectives better and to analyze the linguistic features. Nora Dauenhauer, whose father, Willie Marks, was Jim Marks' niece, was present at the *Ku.éex'* meaning she also understands the context of the speeches. Nora is my paternal aunt and, alongside her husband, Richard Dauenhauer, a scholar of revitalization. Through her, I come to this speech.

Though I will not go into a traditional Tlingit introduction, I will speak briefly in this paper as if you understand Tlingit culture. *Chá aadé yéi xat nay.oo. Forgive me if I make any mistakes.* I am connected to this speech not only through my paternal aunt, who was there at the *ku.éex'*, but through my father as well. The *ku.éex'* was for Jim Marks, the older brother of my father's father, who was a Chookaneidi man, making me and him the same moiety as my grandfather. This recording and speech come from the work of my father's people about my grandfather's people, creating a balance where opposites are working together. I come to this speech seeking an understanding of the complexity of our culture. I do this because I value the work and care my grandparents, the Chookanedi, took to record this sensitive information at their clan memorial for my paternal grandfather's older brother. I also recognize that the speechmaker is my opposite, who would refer to my father and his siblings as grandchildren. As they looked up to their grandparents and uplifted their voices, I aim to do the same. I hope to uplift the T'akdeintaan voice, knowledge, and love for our culture. Breathing life and spirit into how our grandparents did things is how Tlingit people are. We are connected through clans that transcend time, and we cannot do anything without each other. We do not stand on our own words but on the words of our ancestors as a way to guide us. For those who do not understand, I hope one day you will seek the Tlingit way of thinking that allows me to analyze the speech. This T'akdeintaan speech was given at a pinnacle point in the Chookaneidi *ku.éex'*, underscoring its implication and importance.

Briefly, I want to express the difficulties of analyzing this speech. Much of the information and context of the speech is implicit. Dalton, giving this speech, operates and shows that her audience, the host clan, share common societal norms. She does not need to stop and explain what it means when she says *ax eesh háas*, meaning "my father's people." It is already understood and known. She does not need to stop and explain the clan systems and how they work. She simply taps into this shared knowledge among the people. This speech perfectly demonstrates the Tlingit way of life. She orates this speech *through* Tlingit culture rather than *talking about* Tlingit culture. This implicit knowledge and the fact that I was raised going to these kinds of ceremonies makes it more difficult for me to attempt to analyze the speech. At the very beginning of the speech, she uses the term *ax káalk'w háas*, where it is translated as "my brother's children." This demonstrates how translations can fall short, creating erasure of Indigenous identity, which is why Dauenhauer included an explication at the end of the book and also included a long introduction of basic Tlingit society and culture. The translation falls short because the term *brother* does not mark for clan-ship in English. In Tlingit, siblings of the same mother are the same clan because we are a matrilineal society. We are born into the clan of our mother's side of the family. Because we are born this way, it means that the children of a brother are different clans than the immediate family, even though, through blood, they are related. Children of

a sister would be the same clan, however, which is why we have a different term for this niece or nephew of a sister, *kéilk'*. These terms are used often in Tlingit oration, indirectly telling the audience who the speechmaker is. The erasure that occurs here is that *brother's children* does not account or mark for the clanship in English, but Tlingits would understand that, even in English, the meaning would be the opposite.

Through this process of working with the Tlingit text and its translation, I have come to think about translations in a specific way. Translation can only ever have a memory or residue that connects itself to or indexes it to the original meaning. If the memory was never formed, then it is forgotten. Those who are not socialized in Tlingit society do not have the memories to associate the English translation to the Tlingit meanings, which means that the Tlingit meanings are erased and potentially evaluated differently. For example, reading through Dalton's speech, how much will be assessed through a hegemonic cultural gaze? On the other hand, even if you may only speak English but have been socialized in Tlingit society, these faint memories in the translation are strong enough to bridge back to the intended Tlingit meaning. Much like how the phrases "my brother's children" or "my grandparent's people" are marked for a socialized Tlingit person, the phrases tap into the Tlingit clan system. For me, translation means that I need to compensate even more for those who may not know about these unspoken norms.

While trying to analyze a language and culture I grew up with, I found that I had blind spots. At times, I believed I had clearly explained a concept or a part of Tlingit culture. But when I invited other scholars to read through drafts of this paper—Erin Debenport and Georgia Ennis, the editors of this volume, and others—they pointed out that many of these Tlingit concepts needed to be explained further. I then needed to decide what I would fully explain and what information would remain only for the community. In other words, what understandings are just for us?

I have also asked community members to read this paper as well. The linguistic anthropological jargon, such as *chronotope* or *indexes*, was the most foreign part of the paper for them. But the argument, the pulling of the here and there and the then and now, they found compelling and meaningful. It was the community members, too, who demonstrated to me that these Tlingit concepts, even though expressed in English, were argued in an appropriate way and equally meaningful to Tlingits as well. I have tasked myself, then, to accomplish two goals in this paper. First, to strategically present the English translations for readers who may not know about Tlingit society or Tlingit meanings using a linguistic anthropology approach, choosing from the speech the information that may be explained further in a respectable way. Second, to write a paper for a Tlingit reader showing how these older speeches still have meaning, and how they may approach revitalization in Tlingit country by studying, teaching, and using these original Tlingit forms. In the following sections, you will find my attempts to accomplish these goals.

The following table is the speech as transcribed and translated by Nora Marks-Dauenhauer.⁹ I have moved around some translations to match more closely the Tlingit speech, but I have not made any changes to her translations.

TABLE 2. *Jessie Dalton's full speech with English translations*

Line #	Lingít Naa Tláa, Xunaa, 1968	English Jessie Dalton, Hoonah, Alaska, 1968
1	Eeshandéin ágé haa daa tuwatee uháan tsú	Does death take pity on us too
2	ax káalk'w hás (Keet Yaanaayi) áawé	My brothers' children, (Willie Marks) áawé
3	Ax éesh hás?	My fathers?
4	Chá tléix' ax éesh hás	All my fathers.
5	Tléil Eeshandéin haa daa tootí uháan tsu.	It doesn't take pity on us either,
6	Yá wooteeyéit (Unidentified) Yéi áwé	This thing that happens (Unidentified) That's how it is
7	Ách áwé ayáx has x'ayey.áxch	Which is why you hear their voices like this,
8	Yee éesh hás	Your fathers,
9	Tle tlaχ chá nichkáx aa wooxéexгаа ku.aa áwé (Naawéiyaa) Gunalchéesh á (Keet Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh.	Lest they fall without honor (Harry Marvin) Thank you (Willie Marks) Thank you
10	Yee wakhéeni yee yadaax kawadaayi aa	Your tears flowing from your face
11	Akáx áwé	For them
12	Yáa yeedát yanax yeik kawdik'it'	They have all come out at this moment
13	Yee éesh hás	Your fathers
14	Yanax yeik has kawdik'it'. (Naawéiyaa) hó hó	Have all come out (Naawéiyaa) hó hó
15	Ch'ú yáadu sigé hás	They are still present
16	Yóo áwé has du daa ax tuwatee	Is how I feel about them
17	Ax léelk'w hás (Keey Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh	My grandparents. (Willie Marks) Thank you
18	Yáat atóot ahan aa	Here someone stands wearing one,
19	Yá Shaatukwáan Keidlí	This <i>Mountain Tribe's Dog</i>
20	Ch'ú oowayáa áwé	It is just as if
21	Yee sh tudanóogu káx ashaayi yáx áwé daa yoo tuxaatánk, (Keet Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh	It's barking for your pain is how I'm thinking about it, (Willie Marks) Thank you
22	Ax éesh hás, ax káalk'w hás	My fathers, my brothers' children
23	Ax aat hás,	My father's sisters,
24	Aaa.	Yes
25	Yáadu áwé	Here
26	Yáa ashóodei han aa	Someone is standing next to it.
27		
28	Geesh Daax Woogoodí Yéil áyá	It's <i>Raven Who Went Down Along the Bull Kelp</i>
29	Yáanáx á ashóodei aa ahán.	Someone is standing closer, next to it.
30	Lyeedayéik x'óowu	Lyeedayéik's robe
31	A áwé yáanax á. Ashóodei ahán	That is the closer one. Someone is standing next to it
32	Aaa	Yes

Line #	Lingít Naa Tláa, Xunaa, 1968	English Jessie Dalton, Hoonah, Alaska, 1968
	(Naawéiyaa) Gunalchéesh	(Naawéiyaa) Thank you
	(Seilshéix') Gunalchéesh	(Seilshéix') Thank you
33	S'igeidi X'óow áwé	It's <i>The Beaver Blanket</i>
34	Jilkaardáx	From Chilkat
35	Naaxein	A Chilkat robe
	(Unidentified) uhuh	(Unidentified) uhuh
	(Keet Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh	(Willie Marks) Thank you
36	Lutákl	Lutákl
37	Yee éesh	Your father
38	Du x'óowu yéeyi áwé	It was once his blanket,
39	Du naaxeini yéeyi	Once his Chilkat robe
	(Unidentified) Hó hó	(Unidentified) Hó hó
	(Naawéiyaa) Gunalchéesh	(Naawéiyaa) Thank you
40	Yee kujéen áwé tsú	Because of you
41	Gági uwagút	He came out.
	(Séi Akdulxéitl') Hó hó	(David McKinley) Hó hó
	(Keet Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh	(Willie Marks) Thank you
42	Aaa,	Yes
43	Yáa yeedát áwé	At this moment
44	Chá Idakát áwé gági yadixuni yáx áwé ax tuwáa yatee	All of them seem to me as if they're revealing their faces,
45	Yee aat háš	Your father's sisters
46	Ax Tláa	My mother,
47	Saayina.aat	Saayina.aat
	(Unidentified) Yéi á	(Unidentified) That's it
	(Unidentified) Yéi áwé	(Unidentified) That's right
48	Du x'óowu	Her robe
49	Keik'w X'óow	<i>The Tern Robe,</i>
50	Aaa	Yes,
	(Unidentified) Yéi á	(Unidentified) That's it
	(Keet Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh	(Willie Marks) Thank you
51	Yá yee yáx sh daa tuwditaani káa áwé	A person who is feeling like you
52	Aan áwé ayát yakw.ukooxch	Would be brought by canoe,
53	Aaa,	Yes,
54	Yee éesh háš x'aayi	To your father's point,
55	Gaanaxáa	Gaanaxáa
56	Aagáa áwé	This is when
57	Dusáaych áwé yu.á	The name would be called out, it is said
58	Yá eeshandéin sh daa tuwditaani káa	Of the person who is feeling grief.
59	Aaa	Yes,
60	Éesh, Séi Akdulxéitl'	Father, Séi Akdulxéitl'
	(Séi Akdulxéitl') Áawé	(David McKinley) áawé ¹⁰
61	Aaa	Yes,

Line #	Lingít Naa Tláa, Xunaa, 1968	English Jessie Dalton, Hoonah, Alaska, 1968
62	A _x léelk'w yéet	My grandfather's son
63	Koowunagáas', (Koowunagáas') áawé	Koowunagáas', (Joe White) áawé
64	A _x káalk'w yéet	My brother's daughter's son
65	Keet Yaanaayi, (Keet Yaanaayi) Áawé	Keet Yaanaayi (Willie Marks) áawé
66	Aaá	Yes
67	A _x éesh kéilk'	My father's sister's son
68	Xooxkeina.át (Xooxkeina.át) áawé	Xooxkeina.át (Pete Johnson) áawé
69	Tlax wáa sáyú	How very much
70	Yee tula.eesháani káx	For your grief
71	gági yawdixún i aat háa,	Your father's sisters are revealing their faces
72	Káalk'w (Keet Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh	My brother's son (Willie Marks) Thank you
73	Kaatooshtóow (Kaatooshtóow) Áawé	Kaatooshtóow (John F. Wilson) áawé
74	Kaakwsakáa (Kaakwsakáa) Áawé	Kaakwsakáa (David Williams) áawé
75	Aaa,	Yes,
76	A _x éek' shát Aan Káxshawustaan (Aan Káxshawustaan) áawé	My brother's wife, Aan Káxshawustaan (Aan Káxshawustaan) áawé
77	aaa	Yes,
78	Tlax waa sá	How very much it is
79	gági yawdixuni yáx has du daa yoo tuxaátánk	As if they're revealing their faces is how I am thinking about them.
80	Yee kaani yán	My sister-in-law
81	Aaa	Yes
82	gági has yawdixún.	They are revealing their faces
83	Weihá aayi koodás':	The shirt that belonged to Weihá
84	Chá yeisú áwé	It was only recently
85	Du daax'	The rites for him
86	Yan yei jiwtuwanéi	We completed
87	Yeil koodás'. (Keet Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh	<i>The Raven Shirt</i> (Willie Marks) Thank you
88	Tsu hú áyá yáat yan x'ayeey.áx	You heard him here, also,
89	Weihá.	Weihá
90	Yá ax'éek'	This brother of mine
91	Yá yee Guwakaaní	This <i>Peacemaker</i> of yours:
92	Hú du jeex' áwé yándeí kwga.áax.	Will remain in his hands, in his care
93	Yá Weihá koodás'i (Unidentified) Gunalchéesh	This shirt of Weihá (Unidentified) Thank you

Line #	Lingít Naa Tláa, Xunaa, 1968	English Jessie Dalton, Hoonah, Alaska, 1968
94	Áwé ch'a oowayáa yee wakshiyeeex' gági gútxi yáx áwé yatee yeedát. (Keet Yaanaayi) Aaá	Now it is as if he is coming out for you to see (Willie Marks) Yes
95	Aaá	Yes
96	Tlax waa sá	How very much
97	Aan	In it
98	St tuwaagáa kastéeyin hú tsú	He, too, used to be proud
99	Yá yee káani (Unidentified) Ha waa sá	This brother-in-law of yours (Unidentified) Ha waa sá
100	Yeilkudei Hít X'óow	<i>The Raven Nest House Robe.</i>
101	Yáat atóot hán yá yee aat.	Here this father's sister of yours stands wearing it
102	Tliyaanax á aa ku.aa áwé	And on the far side
103	Yaakaayindul.át yee aat,	Is Yaakaayindul.át, your father's sister,
104	Aaá	Yes
105	Dei ch'a ch'áakw áwé has du ée antulaxáchch,	We had long since given up hope of their return,
106	Yá yee aat hás	These fathers' sisters of yours,
107	Yee éesh hás (unidentified) hó hó (unidentified) Gunalchéesh	your fathers (unidentified) hó hó (unidentified) thank you
108	Aaa,	Yes
109	Geesh Daax Woogoodi Yéil K'oodás'	<i>Raven Who Went Down Along the Bull Kelp Shirt</i>
110	i éesh,	Your father
111	Kaadéik, (Kaadéik) Áawé	Kaadéik (Unidentified) áawé
112	Du koodás'i	it's his shirt
113	Á áwé (Unidentified) i x'éit wusi.áx i káalk'w hás	That's the one (Unidentified) Your brother's children are listening to you
114	Á áwé, tléil yéi adaa yoo tooxatánk kaawgaan áyá yóo	That's the one there: I don't feel that it burned
115	Aaa.	Yes
116	Ch'u shóogu axáa wéix' aan i dayéen aan hán i sáni. (Keet Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh (Tsalxaan Guwakaan) Gunalchéesh	It's the same one in which your father's brother is standing there in front of you (Willie Marks) Thank you (Tsalxaan Guwakaan) Thank you
117	Ách áwé	That is why
118	Aaa,	Yes
119	Gusatáan (Gusatáan) Áawé	Gusatáan (Unidentified) áawé
120	Ch'a oowayáa ldakát yeewáan yee xwasaayi	It will be just as if I will have named all of you,
121	Ax kaani yánx siteeyi aa,	Those who are my sisters-in-law,
122	Aaa,	Yes,
123	Ashunaayát ágé nkwaagoot	Can I reach the end,

Line #	Lingít Naa Tláa, Xunaa, 1968	English Jessie Dalton, Hoonah, Alaska, 1968
124	Ax kaalk'w hás?	My brother's children?
125	Aaa.	Yes
126	Ashunaayát ágé nkwaagoot?	Can I reach the end?
127	Yá k'éik'w áyá tléil yan uxlayaakwch,	These terns I have completely explained
128	Aaa,	Yes
129	Yá k'éik'w.	These terns
130	Eeshandéin tuwateeyi káa káx' áwé daak koolyeechch yee aat hás. (Keet Yaanaayi) Áawé	Your fathers' sisters would fly out over the person who is feeling grief (Willie Marks) áawé
131	Aax' áwé	Then
132	Has du x'wáal'i akaadéi	They would let their down fall
133	Has akooldánch	Like snow
134	Wé Eeshandéin tuwateeyi káa. (Tsalxáan Guwakaan) i x'éit wusi.áx i káalk'u hás	Over the person who is feeling grief (Tsalxáan Guwakaan) Your brothers' children are listening to you
	(Naawéiyaa) Gunalchéesh	(Harry Marvin) Thank you
135	Aagáa áwé tléil áwé too kwdunook nuch	That is when, it isn't felt,
136	Has du x'wáal'i	Their down
137	Aagáa áwé	That's when
138	Yee tula.eesháani tín áwé	With your grief
139	Has du kúdi kaadéi	To their nests
140	Has ayakawdllyiji yáx' áwé has du daa ax' tuwatee yee aat hás. (Naawéiyaa) Gunalchéesh á	I feel it's as if your fathers' sisters are flying there (Naawéiyaa) Thank you indeed
141	Aaa.	Yes
142	Yáat ahan aa	Here someone stands
143	Yáat	here
144	Ax' tláa du káak du sáaxu	My mother's mother's brother, his hat
145	Aaa,	Yes
146	T'aakú wátdei áwé yú á woo'koox	To the mouth of the Taku he went by boat
147	Aagáa yóo sáaxw,	Then for that hat
148	Du léel'w hás xoodéi	To his grandparents
149	Du léel'w hás xoodéi	To his grandparents
150	Aaa,	Yes,
151	Aax' áwé du jeet kawdiháa yú.á yá Xíxh'i S'áaxw.	From there it's said he acquired the <i>Frog Hat</i> .
152	A'r'ak'kát áwé uwawúk	Along with it came
153	Yá Weihá jeedáx' aa koodás' (Tsalxáan Guwakaan) Yéi á	The shirt from Weihá (Tsalxáan Guwakaan) That's it
154	Aaa,	Yes
155	Tsu T'aak'óonáx háhé haat kawdiyáa.	It also came from Taku
156	Ách áwé	That is why
157	Gunalchéesh yóo x'ayaxaká	I keep saying, "Thank you"
158	Yee dayéen aan has nági yáa yeedát	That they're standing in front of you at this moment

Line #	Lingít Naa Tláa, Xunaa, 1968	English Jessie Dalton, Hoonah, Alaska, 1968
	(Keet Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh áwé	(Willie Marks) thank you
159	Aaa,	Yes
160	Yá kur'aaygáa	During this warm season
161	gági ugootch	They would come out
162	Yá yee éesh.	These fathers of yours
163	Aagáa áwé	And then
164	Yee tula.eesháani káx áwé gági uwagudi yáx ax tusitee	I feel it's as if it has come out for your grief
165	Yá yee éesh du sáaxu	Your father's hat
166	Aaa,	Yes
	(Naawéiyaa) Gunalchéesh á	(Naawéiyaa) Thank you indeed
167	Yee léelk'w du sáaxu	Your grandparent's hat
168	Aan áwé	With your grief
169	Yanax daak guganóok,	He will burrow down
170	Aan	With it
171	Yee tula.eesháani teen áwé yanax daak guganóok.	With your grief he will burrow down.
	(Tsalxaan Guwakaan) I x'eiit wusi.áx i kaalk'u has	(Tsalxaan Guwakaan) Your brothers' sons are listening to you
172	Ayát sh gavisnoogóot ágé	Not that it can heal you
173	Ax kaalk'u has ax éesh has,	My brothers' children, my fathers,
	(Unidentified) Gunalchéesh	(Unidentified) Thank you
174	Ax aat has	My fathers' sisters
175	Ax kaani yán.	My sisters-in-law
176	Ha yáa yeedát	And now,
177	Aaa,	Yes
178	Chá yax at gwakú "akayaa áyá s ootee	It is like the saying, "They are only imitating them
179	Tlax kaawayikt jeenaxéexgaa"	Lest they grope aimlessly,"
	(Tsalxaan Guwakaan) Gunalchéesh á	(Tsalxaan Guwakaan) Thank you
180	Yá yee léelk'w has aadéi x'ayakáayi yé	The way your grandparents said
181	ách áwé	That's why
182	Ayáa has wudli.aadi yáx has yatee	It's as if they are guiding them
183	Yee éesh has	Your fathers
184	Yáadu aa.	Here is one
185	Yáadu aa.	Here is one
186	Yáat atóot ahan aa.	Here someone stands wearing one
187	Yáa ax léelk'w	This grandfather of mine
188	Yookis'kookéik du sáaxu	The hat of Yookis'kookéik
	(Unidentified) hó hó	(Unidentified) hó hó
189	Yee dayéen	Towards you
190	Yanax wudihaan hú tsú	He too has stood up
191	Aaa.	Yes
	(Unidentified) hó hó	(Unidentified) hó hó
192	I éesh du sáaxu	Your fathers, his hat,

Line #	Lingít Naa Tláa, Xunaa, 1968	English Jessie Dalton, Hoonah, Alaska, 1968
193	Koowunagáas'	Koowunagáas'
	(Koowunagáas') áawé, gunalchéesh áwé	(Unidentified) Thank you, indeed
194	Yee dayéen yanax wudihaan,	He has stood up to face you
	(Keet Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh	(Willie Marks) Thank you
	(Unidentified) Gunalchéesh	(Unidentified) Thank you
195	Aaa	Yes
196	Kageet Kuyéik.	The Loon Spirit
197	Aaa.	Yes,
198	Yáax' áwé	And here,
199	Aaa,	Yes,
200	Yá dziyáak yá ax éek'ch wuliyaagú aa:	Is the one this brother of mine explained a while ago
201	Yaa gaxlatidín yóo aas.	How that tree rolled for a while on the waves
202	Aagáa áwé yan galaháshín	Then when it drifted to shore
203	Gagaanch a.we. akát x'us.utsóowch.	The sun would put its rays on it
204	Aaa.	Yes
205	Du ródei áwé yaa gaxúkch	It would dry to the core
206	Du tula.eesháani.	Its grief
207	Yáa yeedát áwé yee káx' gági yawdzi.áa yá gagaan ax léelk'w hás	At this moment, this sun is coming out over you, my grandparents'
208	Laxkeidí	Mask
	(Unidentified) Yéi á	(Unidentified) That's it
	(Unidentified) Gunalchéesh	(Unidentified) Thank you
	(Unidentified) hó hó	(Unidentified) Hó hó
209	Yáa yeedát	At this moment
210	Gu.aal kwshé yee tóodei wuxoogu yáx wooteek	My hope is that it be like it's drying to your core
211	Yee tula.eesháani.	Your grief
	(Tsalxaan Guwakaan) yéi kgwatée	(Tsalxaan Guwakaan) It shall be
	(Keet Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh, yéi kgwatée.	(Willie Marks) Thank you, it shall be
212	Géelák'w Shakee.át,	Géelák'w Shakee.át,
213	Aaa.	Yes
214	Atóonáx áwé daak woodaxoonch	They would reveal their faces from it,
215	Yee aat hás	Your fathers' sisters
216	Géelák'w toonáx	From Géelák'w
217	Aaa.	Yes
218	Á áwé yáa yeedát wéit. Aan ahán	That's the one there now, someone is standing there with it
219	Yáhakee.át	This headdress
	(Unidentified) Gunalchéesh á	(Unidentified) Thank you indeed
220	Ax léelk'w duhakee.ádi	My grandfather's headdress.
	(Keet Yaanaayi) Gunalchéesh.	(Willie Marks) Thank you

RECONSTRUCTING TIME-SPACE BY ACKNOWLEDGING THE PRESENT

The concept of chronotope has two major components, space and time. In this section, I will be evaluating space, as that is how Dalton begins to establish a chronotopic world. At the beginning of her speech, she begins by acknowledging the realities of the moment—that they are there because death had taken a clan member. One of the most important ways that Dalton closes the physical space between the past and the present is through spatiotemporal deixis. To understand how this is the beginning of the deconstruction process, one must understand Tlingit demonstratives. Instead of English-language determiners like *a/the* or English demonstratives *this/that*, Tlingit only has demonstratives that are optional. This aspect of optionality is significant in speeches, as I will show after explaining the function of these demonstratives. These demonstratives are in relationship to the speaker and the distance between them and the referent(s). The following table helps illustrate this linguistic category:

TABLE 3. *Tlingit demonstratives*

Yá	This one here, close to speaker
Héi	That one there, in the proximity of speaker
Wéi	That one over yonder, seeable by speaker
Yóo	That one way over there, not seeable by speaker

As stated above, Tlingit demonstratives are dependent on the relationship between the perceived distance felt by the speaker and the referent(s). Tlingit demonstratives must come before the referent, which is always a noun phrase, but noun phrases do not require a demonstrative. Though the table is straightforward, allowing for various demonstratives to be used differently depending on the speaker's perspective, some communities tend to use some more frequently than others. For example, in Yakutat, *yóo*, indicating great distance, is used more frequently than *yá* or *wéi*. However, the speaker, Dalton, is from an area where *yóo* is used to demonstrate the distance and is used moderately, showing its strategic uses.

Demonstratives can also be used to indicate a perceived temporal distance by the speaker. When a Tlingit speaker is talking about past events or unspecified past times, the speaker will use the *yóo* demonstrative.¹¹ The following is an example of this case:

“Yóo xáanaa”
DEM evening
“that evening (long ago or a while ago)”

Using this long-distance demonstrative, which indicates that something is too far to be seen, would be expected when talking about the past. Yet, Dalton, who is talking about death and past events, uses demonstratives that indicate closeness to her and the host clan. The following are the first six lines of her speech.

TABLE 4. Lines 1–6

1. Eeshandéin ágé haa daa tuwatee uháan tsú	1. Does it (death) take pity on us, too,
2. ax káalk'w hás	2. My brother's children
3. ax eesh hás	3. My father's people
4. chá tléix' ax eesh has?	4. All my father's people?
5. Tléil eeshandein haa daa tootí uháan tsú	5. It does not take pity on us, either,
6. yá wooteeyéit	6. This thing that happens.

We get a glimpse of the reconstruction process of the current timeline. Demonstrated in line 6, we see Dalton's strategic use of Tlingit demonstratives.

Yá wooteeyéit
 DEM thing that happens
 “this thing that happens”

This line is in reference to death, also seen in line 1. Since it is dealing with an event that has happened a while ago, one would think that *wéi* or *yóo* would be used to distance the audience and the grieving from the death. Instead, she uses *yá*, meaning that death is close to her and consequently close to the listeners as well, which is true. It is true that they are close to death because they are there to handle a loss of a clan's person. However, this death had occurred over a year ago. Reason dictates that she would use *yóo* because it has happened further in the past, but instead she uses the flexibility of Tlingit demonstratives to bring events closer to everyone. This is a juxtaposition of space-time where *yá* is here and now, and “things that happen” refer to the past events. She has begun picking up the past, because these events are so close, she can touch them, according to her demonstrative use.

Dalton has started within the timeframe that everyone in the audience shares. In line 1, she asks the rhetorical question to her brother's children and all of her father's people.

“Eeshandéin ágé haa daa tuwatee uháan tsú ax káalk'w hás”
 “Does it (death) take pity on us, too, my brother's children”

To which she answers her own question:

“Tléil eeshandein haa daa tootí uháan tsú yá wooteeyéit.”
 “It does not take pity on us, either, this thing that happens.”

She has acknowledged the realities of life, that death is an aspect of living that does not take pity on anyone. It is crucial that she starts out with this acknowledgement of reality, because she is then able to work on creatively reconstructing that very space-time. And so, we are in this space and time of a year ago, death had taken someone. She also addresses the host clan by establishing how she is related to them: in this case, she is related to them because of her father's clan and the clan of her brother's children. She is connecting to them through the people of the living.

CHRONOTOPE OF KINSHIP AND CLANSHIP

The deployment of intimate knowledge of Tlingit kinship and clanship systems is another strategy to transform time-space, which is uniquely accessible only to cultural insiders. There are many examples from the speech, however. Table 5 contains such an example, highlighting this linguistic strategy. This passage is in reference to the three men who spoke just before Dalton.

TABLE 5. Lines 7–10

7. Ách áwé ayáx has xáyey.áxch	7. Which is why you hear their voices like this,
8. yee eesh háš,	8. Your fathers,
9 tle tláx chá nichkák aa woóxéxgaa ku.aa áwé,	9. Lest your tears fall without honor,
10. yee wakhéeni yee yadaáx kawadaayí aá	10. That are flowing from your faces.

In lines 7 through 9, she quickly returns to the current moment. The three clansmen have just spoken to the host clan. The hosts, especially during this part of the ceremony, are tearful and crying. Dalton acknowledges that they are grieving by mentioning their tears. What she says tells them that they are there so their tears will not “fall without honor.” This mention of their tears is common in these kinds of speeches. In some cases, an ancestral blanket will become like a handkerchief, and the guest will metaphorically wipe their tears with it. In this case, she uses kinship. To fully appreciate what Dalton is connecting in lines 7 and 8, one must understand Tlingit clanship and how that dictates how people address each other. We, the Tlingit people, are born into clans, following our mothers. Our mother’s clan determines what our clan will be. We are also children of our father’s clan. When we see or meet someone of that clan, we address them as our father’s clan or our fathers.

In lines 7 and 8, Dalton is utilizing this kinship, binding these two clans together more intimately by showing how they are related, which ultimately makes the words weigh more heavily. Consequently, she needs to be even more careful with her words because she has become the voices of their fathers. She says, “Lest your tears fall without honor.” She is saying that, if their fathers’ voices were not there and if the clan was not present during this time, their tears would fall without honor. This honoring of grief—being present from the start of the grieving period, during it, and transitioning from it—is dictated by the Tlingit practice of “woosh ya_x kudidáal.” It means “to balance each other out.” This process is also understood through Tlingit clanship. All Tlingits are born into either one of two groups, called a *moiety* in English. Each moiety then is subdivided into clans, then subdivided into clan houses found in specific communities. When one moiety is in sorrow, the opposite clan must come to their aid, especially the grandchildren and children of that clan. When Dalton honors their grief by being present, she is pointing to that practice of swift action. Dalton’s clan is there to ensure their host’s tears will not fall without honor.

She has situated herself and everyone in the present moment. Dalton is able to create a chronotope that encompasses the entire space-time of the clan and its members. In this frame that she creates in her narrative, ancestors as well as those currently grieving occupy the same space (the hall) and time (the time when she is

delivering her speech). She, in the following passage, uses the concept of tears to connect and weave together the present and access the past through the clan system.

TABLE 6. Lines 11–17

11. Akáx áwé 12. yáa yeedát yanáx yeik kawdikít' 13. yee eesh háš 14. yanax yéik has kawdikít'.	11. For them (your tears), 12. They have all come out at this moment, 13. Your fathers, 14. Have all come out.
15. Ch'u yáadu sígé háš, 16. yóo áwé has du daa ax tuwatee 17. ax léelk'w háš.	15. They are still present 16. Is how I feel about 17. My grandparents.

Through this passage, Dalton has created the chronotopic world. She does this by relating two aspects of the current moment, one being “tears” and the host clan’s relationship to her clan, the other being her position as their paternal aunt through the clan system. By saying that their fathers have all come out, she accomplishes two feats. First, she is talking about the living clan members who are present, crying; second, she is inviting the ancestors to occupy the space (the hall). In the foundation of the world, she is occupying it with her clan and her ancestors, who are related to the hosts. They are there for the hosts’ tears, which are semiotically the index and icon of grief and pain. There is much more going on in this segment of Dalton’s speech as well, and it is common through the speech. Her verb conjugation in Tlingit tell us more than what the English translations could.

THE SEMIOTICS OF MORPHOSYNTAX

Here, we will explore more of the morphosyntax: the past tense suffix *-in*. At the end of the verb in line 12, Dalton uses the perfective aspect. The perfective aspect is an inflection of the verb that entails a completion of the action. By using perfective aspect, she has told the hosts that they have completed in the action of all coming to this space. If she were to use the past tense suffix, it would mean, “They had come out.” The major difference here is that the past tense would entail that they are no longer there—that they had come to the ceremony and then left—while using the perfective aspect means that they are there still. There is a juxtaposition between those who have already passed away and being present at that moment. They can be in the same space in the world that she has constructed. This pattern of bringing people who have passed on to the same space is clear in the final lines. In lines 15 through 17, she talks about her grandparents.

“Ch’u yáadu sígé háš, yóo áwé has du daa ax tuwatee ax léelk’w háš.”

“They are still present, is how I feel about my grandparents.”

Though Dalton’s grandparents passed away some time ago, she still feels their presence among them. Before, at the beginning of her speech, she connects the clans together, then brings forward the host clans’ relations, and then she finally brings her family to share the space in the hall. At the start of her speech, the hosts’ ancestors are mingling among the people, just as the people are with each other at the memorial. All are there

to witness the resolution of how grief will be removed through her speech, and they are all now in this constructed world.

WEAVING PAST AND PRESENT THROUGH OBJECTS

At.ooow encompasses Tlingit culture. The literal translation of this word is “something that has been purchased.” This “something” can be paid for using trade, money, or the loss of a life (by accident or purposeful). An example of what can be *at.ooow* is demonstrated in the following case:

In the Haines area in Alaska, the land was mostly owned by the Kaagwaataan clan, my clan.¹² However, when the Lukaax̄.adí, my father’s clan, came through by boat, someone had fallen overboard and drowned. This event has now become *at.ooow* for the Lukaax̄.adí. The Kaagwaataan clan acknowledged the payment through the accidental death, which is why the water and land in that area is now the Lukaax̄.adí’s. Any aspect of this event—people, names, territory—becomes *at.ooow* and can turn into clan objects by commemorating the event onto Chilkat robes. Chilkat robes and emblems are how Tlingit people index histories. Because they are indexes of the past, the objects become vessels to the past, as seen in the following passage.

TABLE 7

36. Lutákl̄l	Lutákl̄l (name of the steward)
37.Yee éesh	Your father
38. Du xóowu yéeyi áwé	It was once his blanket
39. Yee kujéen áwé tsú	Because of you all
40. Gági uwagút	He has come out

During this passage, Jessie Dalton refers to a Chilkat robe worn by her clan member. The man who owned it, Lutákl̄l, is an example of *at.ooow*. Both the name and the blanket are used as a vehicle to the past. Once she has referenced the past, she says the following:

“Yee kujéen áwé tsú gági uwagút”

“Because of you all, he has come out”

By saying this, Dalton calls out the name of the steward of the blanket, the fathers of the host clan. She invokes this history of stewardship of the blanket, creating a familial tie. The blanket has become the symbol of their deceased father. However, unlike the Cuban possession instance, this is not a theatrical transformation or performance.¹³ Instead, the transformation of persona in the standing person anchors the constructed world through this index of the blanket, pulling the events that have passed to the present moment, a long-ago past living within a person. This occupation stems from the logic of reincarnation, in which Tlingits have long believed. The logic of reincarnation is demonstrated in the use of this object. This limited reincarnation happens when the person is wearing the blanket, and for a short while they become a reincarnated ancestor. The person in the blanket is named after Lutákl̄l, so when she

says, “because of you all, he has come out,” in this moment, Lutákl is there before them, transcending time and space: the person reincarnates as their namesake.

The construction of the chronotope informs us of the Tlingit worldview. We can see this first in the speaker’s use of familial ties. In all the passages presented, Dalton always brings it back to how she and the host clan are related. She invokes the names of their relatives; in this way, she is calling them forward. As she starts to call off these names, she is inviting them into the space, into the hall. When she does that, she fashions the chronotopic world: the space they are in is filled with ancestors. The people still living also occupy that space, and to reconstruct the time, the people living can then shed their current personas for the personas their names hold—they become their namesakes. This process is a limited reincarnation. When she creates the chronotope with the clan objects, she can then bring the people to ancestral homelands, as seen in the following passage. She pulls the past to the present and accomplishes this by anchoring the time with a clan object.

TABLE 8

201. yaa gaxlatídín yóo aas	201. The tree rolled for a while on the waves
202. Aagáa áwé yan Galaháshín	202. Then when it drifted to shore
203. Gaganach áwé akát x̄us.utsóowch	203. The sun would put its rays on it.
204. Aaa.	204. Yes.
205. Du tóodei áwé yaa gaxúkch	205. It would dry it to its core
206. Du tula.eesháani	206. Its grief
207. Yáa yeedát áwé yee káx’ gági yawdzi.áa yáa Gagan, ax̄ léelk’w hás.	207. At this moment, this sun is coming out over you, my grandparents’ mask.
208. Lax̄keidí	208. Lax̄keidí
209. Yáa yeedát	209. Right now
210. Gu.aal kwshé yee tóodei wuxoogu yáx̄ wooteek yee tula.eesháani.	210. My hope is, it is drying to your core, your grief.

This passage is transformative and a turning point of Dalton’s speech. Before, I noted how she was using the perfective aspect to show how the ancestors are among them because they have completed the action of *coming out*. It means the ancestors have gathered and are still with them, sharing the same space. In this passage, though, she uses the past tense suffix, seen in line 201. She uses this past tense suffix *-in*. It means that the tree—she uses the term *yóo*, a long-distance object out of eyesight, preceding the word *tree*—is no longer rolling on the waves. This statement means that it is no longer happening, which means, too, that the host clan are not lost at sea. The tree is a metaphor for a person who is lost and consumed with grief. A rolling tree at sea has no control of where it goes, much like how one feels when a loved one is lost. This tree, too, is no longer “unseeable.” The host, plainly sitting in front of Dalton, can see them. Again, she shows her strategic mastery of Tlingit oratory. In line 202, we also see this past tense marking on the verb *drift*. To use this in succession, in line 201 and 202, we can see her thoughts on the grieving host clan. She is saying that the tree,

a metaphor for those who are grieving, was at some point far out at sea, struggling. Dalton says that about the grieving, they were once also struggling. Then the tree has come to shore. They have coordinated this memorial so that they, too, have made it to shore. In these lines, we see a juxtaposition again of space. Space is the shore and the ocean, symbolizing the journey of going through sorrow, which is juxtaposed with the hall they are sitting in. Dalton is pushing or moving past the sorrow toward the past, indicated by her past tense and demonstrative. The sorrow that has caused the host clan to act, those actions are out at sea, while their feelings still remain. Since the feelings remain, she must induce the healing process. The movement toward healing is seen in the following lines, beginning with line 207:

“Yáa yeedát áwé yee káx’ gági yawdzi.áa yáa Gagaan, ax léelk’w hás.

“At this moment this sun is coming out over you, my grandparents’ mask.”

Dalton transforms the physical space by bringing out the sun mask. She is saying that the sun has come out to beam its rays into the bereaved. Everyone has drifted to shore and landed on the beach. She juxtaposes the two spaces, and through her words, the community hall transforms into the seashore. She now needs to take the grief again from everyone, which is what we see in the following line:

“Gu.aal kwshé yee tóodei wuxoogu yáx wooteek yee tula.eesháani.”

“My hope is, it is drying to your core, your grief.”

This is the line that Jessie Dalton has been leading up to. Dalton extracts the sorrow. This is the way Tlingit people traditionally cope with death. At this moment, Dalton creates a world and occupies it with clan members, both past and present. She takes the symbol of the sun and wills the sun’s rays to dawn on them to dry the mourning clan’s grief away. In this world, the sun can make the grief dissipate.

DECOLONIZATION THROUGH CHRONOTOPES

Jessie Dalton created a world and space that transcends the period of colonization. Since their first contact with Russians in 1741, and their ongoing relationships with settler institutions such as the United States government since 1867, Tlingits and other Alaska Native tribes have been surrounded by signs of settler colonialism. Some of these signs are linguistic, in which some dialects of Tlingit use Russian lexical borrowings and others use English ones. Other aspects of daily life, especially in the twenty-first century, include technology such as computers, cell phones, and motorized vehicles. Institutionally, there has been a long history of ongoing forced assimilation through education. It once was illegal to speak Native languages, denying the intergenerational transmission of Indigenous languages. As a result, the erasure of such languages has magnified a great deal. Even at the time of the speech by Jessie Dalton, who was forced to learn English in a boarding school in Sitka, many elders knew the language and culture were shifting to the Western world. This sentiment is understood by looking at the settings of where the speech was taken place.¹⁴ At the beginning of the speech, she acknowledges the moment they all share. Someone has

passed away. The world that they live in is one where the government does not want Indigenous people to speak their languages. They have traveled long distances by sea or air. These facts about everyday life signal colonization. All the people there know about how their way of life has changed. They recognize that the culture is going away. Yet, through the chronotopic world that Jessie Dalton creates, the space they are now in is transformed, decolonized. The people there are all Tlingit. The ancestors that are there are all Tlingit. She transforms the room to ancestral homelands, taking all of the people there on a healing journey.

Discussing decolonization, one might understand it to mean a return to a time before colonization, to turn back time. However, that is not what I argue in this paper. Instead, I look at decolonization in the terms of healing, taking the grief away, as Dalton has done. She took a space that was built with modern machines and she indigenized it. She invoked the ancestors to be with them. She then manifested places for the audience to see, semiotically, through clan motifs. She uses the motifs to take the pain away. Through this Tlingit practice, she has decolonized the space and time for the remainder of the ceremony. Ancestors past, present, and future held hands together that night. Every aspect of life has been transformed to being Tlingit. This practice of healing has existed since before colonial contact. It stems from being Tlingit. If we aim to decolonize through means of revitalization, then we must look internally in the Indigenous cultures and languages to find ways to do it. Dalton offers a process for us to start to heal and indigenize colonized spaces and minds, resulting in decolonization. She did it because there was no other way for her to remove the sorrow. Revitalization must succeed, because colonization aims to rid Indigenous people of their ways of healing. Living in spaces that are colonial, we must constantly be healing. We must indigenize so that one day, when we are called upon, we, too, can collapse time and space with the living.

Dalton allows us to see how the imagination is critical in the decolonial process and, what is more important, how she challenges concepts of chronotope as originally proposed by Bakhtin. She shows us by creating a chronotopic world only accessible to the Tlingit that it is possible to strategically deny the settler colonial process of elimination from affecting the Tlingit people in space and time. This one case study of Dalton using chronotope gives us a way to understand more deeply how decolonization has been happening, and a way to actively decolonize beyond a Tlingit context by implementing chronotopes. Through process of removing grief, she, in fact, is able to imagine a world that is not saturated by settler colonialism nor white supremacy. By occupying, filling the space with Tlingit ancestors, territories, and histories, she acts upon settler signs by taking away their connection to a settler colonial history and imbuing them with new meanings that are indigenously informed. She indigenizes the space by actively decolonizing settler signs and repurposing these signs as a means to heal, changing the narrative. Settler colonialism may be a process aiming to erase Indigenous people, but Indigenous people are not responding to it. Instead, Dalton shows us that indigeneity can just as easily saturate a colonized space by centering Indigenous ways of doing and being.

NOTES

1. Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).
2. Asif Agha, "Recombinant Selves in Mass Mediated Spacetime," *Language and Communication* 27, no. 3 (2007): 324.
3. Jan Blommaert, "Chronotopes, Scales, and Complexity in the Study of Language in Society," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 44, no. 1 (2015): 110.
4. *Ibid.*, 105–16.
5. Kristina Wirtz, "The Living, the Dead, and the Immanent," *HAU Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 6, no. 1 (2016): 349.
6. Nora Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer, *Haa Tuwunáagu Yís, for Healing Our Spirit : Tlingit Oratory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press; Sealaska Heritage Institute, 1990).
7. *Ku.éex'* is translated as "to be invited." The term that I use here, "memorial," is used for ease of translation, even though "memorial" does not encompass the entire event. The *ku.éex'* lasts much longer: in the past, these ceremonies would last for days, but modern ones last about twenty-four hours. It is a gathering to fully complete the mourning period of a clan, and to publicly end that period. To understand more about the *ku.éex'*, refer to the Dauenhauer book, which explains it in more detail.
8. Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer, *Haa Tuwunáagu Yís*, 367.
9. *Ibid.*, 242–57.
10. This does not have an English equivalent and is too difficult to translate.
11. Note here the "yóo" preverb *looks* like the demonstrative and yet is different. There is also a "yáa" preverb, which is spoken the same way as the "yá" demonstratives. They should not be confused with each other. The preverb is initial in a verb phrase and syntactically required, while demonstratives are initial in the noun phrase and optional.
12. I felt that I was able to tell this small history of my father's clan because of the relation that his clan has with mine. By telling my father's clan's history, I am indirectly telling my own history. It is appropriate that I tell this history in this way to highlight and honor my father's clan and to not dishonor my clan by directly talking about myself. Because of this cultural Tlingit practice, I don't feel it is appropriate that I introduce myself.
13. Wirtz, "The Living, the Dead, and the Immanent," 343–69.
14. Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer, *Haa Tuwunáagu Yís*.